



**Corporate Policy &
Resources**

Thursday, 9 February 2023

Subject: Community Grants Programme

Report by:

Assistant Director Homes and Communities

Contact Officer:

Grant White
Communities Manager

grant.white@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To approve financial resources for continuation of community grants programme.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. Committee accept the recommendation from Prosperous Communities Committee to approve £144k for the delivery of the Councillor Initiative Fund from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027.
2. Committee accept the recommendation from Prosperous Communities Committee to approve £200k for the continued delivery of the Flagship Community Grants Programme from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

Grant funding agreements used meet legal requirements and have been approved for use by Legal Services. All grants awarded will comply with necessary legal regulations and same requirements will be placed on projects and organisations funded.

(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report MUST be seen by the MO

Financial : FIN/119/23/CPR/SL

The Community Grant Scheme proposed within the report results in a total budget requirement of £344k over 4 years;

1. £144k for the Councillor Initiative Fund over 4 years (2023/24 to 2026/27), and
2. £200k for the Community Grant Programme for years 3 (2025/26) and 4 (2026/27). *Year 1 (2023/24) and 2 (2024/25) to be funded from UKSPF.*

The total budget requirement of £344k over 4 years to be met from General Fund Balances. This reduces the current forecast balance at the end of 2026/27 to £3.495m which is £0.995m above the minimum revenue balance of £2.5m.

There is £0.023m balance remaining on the Match Funding Grant allocation in 2022/23 (as of 31 December 2022). It is requested that any remaining balance at year end 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 be carried forward into 2025/26. This will reduce the requirement from GFB in 2025/26.

(N.B.) All committee reports MUST have a Fin Ref

Staffing :

The management of the Community Grants Programme will be delivered using existing staff resources within the Council's Communities Team.

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

Grant funding activity will be delivered in accordance with Council's equality and diversity policies. Organisations receiving funding will be required to meet the same standards and protections are included within grant funding agreements.

Data Protection Implications :

Grant funding activity will comply with all necessary data protection requirements. Data collected for grant awards will be stored securely including financial information for grant payments.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

The delivery of the Community Grants Programme will utilise a digital first approach with use of electronic forms, documents and e-mail to avoid the need for printing.

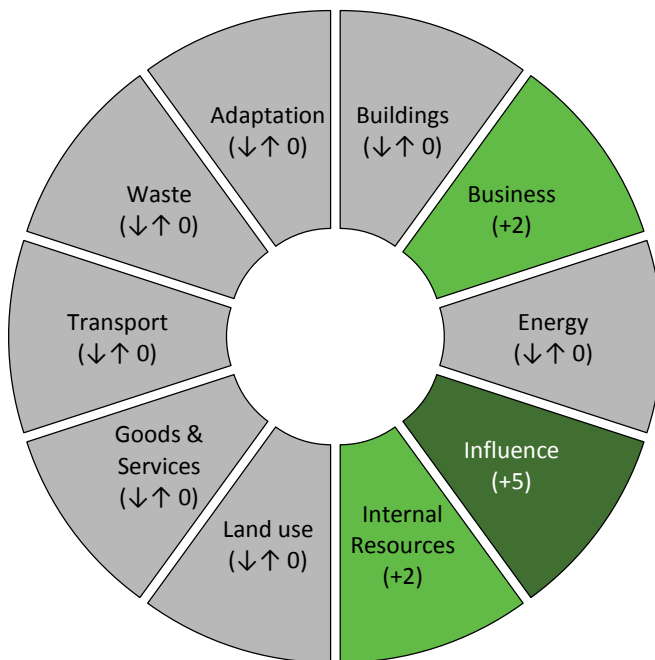
Providing a community grants programme enables the council to directly support a wide range of community led projects, some of which may have a direct or secondary impact on carbon reduction and/or environmental improvements.

Common examples include the creation or enhancement of green/blue spaces, improvements to community facility energy efficiency and projects that support increased active travel.

Where community grants are awarded to projects that have an impact on carbon reduction or the environment, part of the grant monitoring will include capturing relevant information. The scoring and review methods for deciding to award a community grant will take environmental impact into consideration.

Grant awards made to community organisations may help support increased business sustainability. A common example of this would be grant funding to a community facility to improve energy efficiency which also results in lower running costs.

Grants awarded from the council can play a significant role in helping community led projects to attract and secure external match funding. For projects that have a carbon reduction or environmental impact, our grant awards may directly secure match funding towards achieving such an impact within West Lindsey.



Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :

There are no considerations for this report however some organisations funded may have a direct or in-direct impact on helping to reduce the risk of crime and disorder. Where possible this will be captured in any monitoring and evaluation reporting.

Health Implications:

The provision of a Community Grants Programme will provide direct funding to enable a range of projects across West Lindsey. Guidance issued to applicants will highlight and encourage the importance of health and wellbeing outcomes as a result of community projects delivered.

It is anticipated that projects funded through the community grants programme will have either direct or in-direct health and wellbeing benefits. The application process will try to identify planned health outcomes and post-project evaluation work will explore this further and capture outcomes achieved.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**West Lindsey UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan**

Concurrent meeting of the Prosperous Communities and Corporate Policy and Resources Committee – Thursday 7th July 2022

<https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=274&MID=3298#AI18438>

Community Grants Programme

Prosperous Communities Committee – Tuesday 6th December 2023

<https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=176&MId=3178&Ver=4>

Risk Assessment :**Call in and Urgency:**

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1 Introduction

1.1 On 30 January 2018 the Prosperous Communities Committee approved the delivery of a Community Grants Programme over a 5-year period running from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2023.

1.2 The Community Grants Programme has consisted of the following funds:

Councillor Initiative Fund

£144,000 from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2023

£4,000 per Councillor for 2019 to 2023

Each Councillor has a set allocation of funding and is able to make awards to local projects and organisations.

Match Funding Grant

Total fund: £450,000

Grants up to £8,000 (up to 50% of project costs)

Funding to support wide range of community projects and helps to secure match funding.

Community Defibrillator Scheme

Total fund: £50,000

Supporting installation of community accessible defibrillators.

1.3 A full spend is forecast for all the above schemes.

1.4 On 7 July 2022 the concurrent meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee and the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approved the West Lindsey UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan.

1.5 The West Lindsey UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan includes the creation of a new Flagship Community Grants Programme. This new programme will utilise funds from the UKSPF matched with any remaining funds from the existing Match Funding Grant when it closes in March 2023.

1.6 The UKSPF Flagship Community Grants Programme will be funded to run during the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years.

1.7 On Tuesday 6 December 2022, the Prosperous Communities Committee approved the following recommendations:

- The continued delivery of the Councillor Initiative Fund from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027
- The continued delivery of the Flagship Community Grants Programme (previously agreed) from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027
- Recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for financial approval

- 1.8 This report recommends financial approval to deliver the above grant funding activity as recommended by the Prosperous Communities Committee.

2 Community Grants Impact

- 2.1 From 2019-2022, our Match Funding Grant and Councillor Initiative Fund awarded over £290,000 and leveraged over £1.9 million. This means for every £1 that we awarded, over £6 was leveraged from external funds or matched by the partner.
- 2.2 The grant schemes contributed to our Corporate Plan priorities by improving or developing community facilities and community-led service and activities which enabled increase physical activity, improved health and wellbeing across the district's residents and greater quality of life and levels of independence among vulnerable residents.
- 2.3 The projects we funded across the district included new and enhanced play facilities, new community-led cultural activities, the delivery of carbon-reduction initiative and supported community-led services to our most vulnerable residents.
- 2.4 As well as bringing benefits to our residents and leveraging greater funds into our communities, our grant schemes also strengthened our relationships and partnership working with the voluntary and community sector. This has enabled us to develop a better understanding of the needs and possibilities within our communities.

3 Community Grant Programme delivery 2025/26 and 2026/27

- 3.1 Delivery of community grants in 2025/26 and 2026/27 will provide further reach to support community led projects beyond the current UKSPF funding allocation. It will build upon learning obtained whilst delivering grant activity during 2023/24 to 2024/25.
- 3.2 Details of how the UKSPF Flagship Community Grants Programme will be delivered will be presented to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee in February 2023 as part of approving UKSPF Business Cases. This will establish the approach and governance of delivering the community grants programme.
- 3.3 This report proposes the following financial resources are approved to deliver approved grant activity aligned to the UKSPF Flagship Community Grants Programme:

Councillor Initiative Fund

£144,000 from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027 (4 years)

£4,000 per Councillor for 2023 to 2027

Flagship Community Grant Programme – Year 3 (25/26) and 4 (26/27)

£200,000 from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027

To provide continued grant funding beyond current UKSPF

3.4 The Councillor Initiative Fund will launch again in June 2023 after the May 2023 elections.

3.5 The provision of a community grants programme spanning 4 years will play a direct role in meeting our current and any future corporate plan objectives by:

- Supporting community and volunteer led activity
- Delivering projects that benefit the environment, health & wellbeing, connectivity and other impacting factors on our residents
- Supporting vulnerable and at-risk individuals and organisations
- Maintaining and enhancing community facilities and assets including heritage, green spaces and recreational facilities
- Securing match funding into West Lindsey
- Supporting community organisations and the wider voluntary and community sector to be effective and sustainable

4 Financial Profile

4.1 The following details the financial profile of the planned UKSPF Flagship Community Grants Programme with the additional recommendations in this report:

	23/24 to 24/25	25/26 to 26/27	TOTAL
UKSPF	£525k	£0	£525k
REPF	£477k	£0	£477k
Councillor Initiative Fund	£144k		£144k
Community Grant Programme Year 3 and 4	£0	£200k	£200k
TOTAL:			£1,467k

- **UKSPF – UK Shared Prosperity Fund**
- **REPF – Rural England Prosperity Fund**
- These grants must be spent within 2 years (23/24 & 24/25). Any remaining council funds at year end 2024/25 to be carried forward, which will reduce the requirement from GFB in 2025/26.

4.2 The total budget requirement of £344k over 4 years to be met from General Fund Balances. This reduces the current forecast balance at the end of 2026/27 to £3.582m which is £1.082m above the minimum revenue balance of £2.5m.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 Committee accept the recommendation from Prosperous Communities Committee to approve £144k for the delivery of the Councillor Initiative Fund from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027.
- 5.2 Committee accept the recommendation from Prosperous Communities Committee to approve £200k for the continued delivery of the Flagship Community Grants Programme from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027.